



Lakeland Municipal School Referendum 2014

WHAT IS ON THE JULY 16, 2013, REFERENDUM BALLOT?

The July 16 referendum includes a single question asking whether the City of Lakeland should be authorized to create a municipal school district. Please see the following page for the exact wording of the referendum question.

WHAT AUTHORITY WOULD A LAKE LAND MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DISTRICT HAVE?

A Lakeland municipal school district would operate independently of any county or Memphis/Shelby County Schools System. A municipal school district would ensure local control of Lakeland public schools. It would establish the right of Lakeland citizens to elect a municipal board of education and to provide a superintendent for the Lakeland municipal public schools.

CAN LAKE LAND AFFORD TO START ITS OWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS?

Yes. Tennessee laws require that taxes collected for schools must “follow the children.” The municipality’s public schools would receive at least the same state and county funding as the county’s schools in Lakeland currently receive. In fact, approximately 93% of the funding needed to operate a municipal school district comparable to our current system would come from county and state funds.

WILL LAKE LAND RAISE TAXES FOR A LAKE LAND MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DISTRICT?

No. At this time, the revenue estimated for operating a Lakeland municipal school district has already been enacted.

Lakeland voters already voted to increase the sales tax in last year’s (2012) referendum, which increased the sales tax in Lakeland by a half cent to the equivalent of an additional nickel paid in local option sales tax for every \$10 spent on retail purchases in Lakeland.

The remaining approximately 7% of funds for the proposed Lakeland municipal school district will be raised from the half-cent sales tax increase and funds raised from a dedicated portion of Lakeland’s property tax already in effect.

IF THE REFERENDUM PASSES, WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? IF IT DOES NOT PASS, WHAT HAPPENS?

If the referendum passes, a Lakeland municipal school district would be formed, and citizens would elect a school board with the election for a Lakeland Board of Education on November 7. Plans would be developed for the municipal school district up and running for the 2014– 2015 school year.

If the referendum does not pass, Lakeland schools would continue to be part of the new, unified Memphis and Shelby County school district. The majority of the 13-member Memphis/Shelby Country school board would live in the city of Memphis. This school board would be responsible for educating the children living in Lakeland.

WHEN AND WHERE CAN I VOTE?

Voter registration: The deadline for Municipal Schools Referendum is Monday, June 17.

Early Voting: Saturday, June 29 from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. at the Refuge Church, 9817 Huff N Puff Road

Municipal Schools Referendum: Tuesday, July 16 from 7 a.m. - 7 p.m. at the First Baptist Church of Lakeland, 4500 Canada Road

IF A LAKELAND MUNICIPAL SCHOOL SYSTEM IS CREATED, WHEN WILL SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS TAKE PLACE?

If Lakeland voters vote “yes” to approve Lakeland municipal school district, a Board of Education Election will be on Thursday, November 7 from 7 a.m. - 7 p.m. at the First Baptist Church of Lakeland, 4500 Canada Road. Early voting to be determined.

If the schools referendum passes, more information is to be announced as soon as the information is available.

WHAT IS THE REFERENDUM QUESTION?

Below is the referendum question, exactly as it will appear on the July 16 ballot. You may vote “yes” or “no” to the question.

Shall the City of Lakeland be authorized to create a municipal school district that shall meet the standards of adequacy established by applicable State law and regulation, which standards include raising and spending each year the required amount of local funds for the operation of the municipal school district that, for calculation purposes only, would at least be equal to the amount that would be raised through a fifteen cents (\$.15) tax levy on each One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) of taxable property for each year if all such taxes were collected?

WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION?

For more information about the July 17 referendum, visit www.lakelandtn.gov or call City Hall at (901) 867-2717.